

REMARKS

Claims 11 and 14 have been amended. New dependent claims 21 and 22 ultimately depending from claim 11 have been added. Claims 11 - 22 are currently pending in the present application.

In the Office Action, the title of the invention and the drawing are objected to. Also, in the Office Action, the claims are noted to contain several grammatical errors. Furthermore, in the Office Action, claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Moreover, in the Office Action, claims 11, 12, 15, 18, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Vogel US Patent No. 5,725,001. Also, in the Office Action, claims 11, 15, 17, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Patent No. 1,968,172 to Johnson (hereinafter assumed instead to be Johnson US Patent No. 2,968,172). Further additionally, in the Office Action, claims 13, 14, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson US Patent No. 2,968,172 in view of Mueller-Kirschbaum et al US Patent No. 5,404,606. Moreover, in the Office Action, claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vogel US Patent No. 5,725,001 in view of Büttner et al GB 2 052 251.

With regard to the objection to the title of the invention, the title of the invention has now been amended in accordance with the Examiner's kind suggestion to now read: "Method And Apparatus For Controlling The Supply Of Cleaning Fluid In A Washing Process".

With regard to the objection to the drawing as lacking a label "Figure 1", a new sole figure of the drawings has been submitted herewith now including the label "Figure 1".

With regard to the note concerning grammatical errors, claims 11 and 14 have now been amended to clarify these claims.

With regard to the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, claim 11 has now been amended and it is

respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

With regard to the rejections of claim 11 – 20 variously under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of the several applied prior art references, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the amendment of claims 11 and 14 and the following comments.

Conventional appliances sometimes are operated in a manner in which a fixedly pre-determined amount of washing or rinsing agents is added to a cleaning liquid and this brings with it the disadvantage that, during the washing or rinsing process, the quantity of washing or rinsing agent poured into the appliance by the user is completely used and consumed without taking into account the quantity of washing and rinsing agent actually required. Dishwashers are known in which the water hardness of the cleaning liquid is determined by suitable sensors to determine the amount of rinse aid added at the end of the rinsing program. However, other crucial criteria for the quantity of cleaning agent required, such as for example, the loading state of the dishwasher or the type of contamination of the items to be cleaned are not taken into account.

The present invention as exemplified by, for example, an exemplary embodiment recited in independent claim 11 of the present application, relates to an appliance operable to carry out at least one cleaning process using cleaning liquid. The appliance includes an assembly for placing into contact with one another a cleaning liquid and at least one item to be cleaned. Also, the appliance includes a system for supplying cleaning agent into the cleaning liquid, the system including a sensor that determines the content of washing-active substances in the cleaning liquid during the cleaning process and a dosing device that alternately supplies additional cleaning agent to the cleaning liquid in the event that the sensed content of washing-active substances is below a predetermined lower value and supplies fresh water to the cleaning liquid in the event that the content of washing-active substances is above a predetermined upper value.

The Office Action relies upon Vogel '001 and Johnson '172 for their disclosure of systems for operating an appliance operable to carry out a cleaning process using liquid, wherein steps are performed for determining the content in the liquid of a detergent, for supplying additional detergent to the cleaning liquid in the event that the content of detergent is determined to be below a predetermined lower value, and for supplying rinse water to the liquid in the event that the content of detergent is determined to be above a predetermined upper value. Additionally, the Office Action relies upon Mueller-Kirschbaum et al '606 for its disclosure of a bubble tensiometer to measure surface tension.

It is respectfully submitted, however, that the no reason is provided in the Office Action for believing that one of ordinary skill in the art would consider modifying either of the systems of Vogel '001 or Johnson '172 to incorporate the bubble tensiometer approach of Mueller-Kirschbaum et al '606. Thus, it is submitted that claims 11 - 20 of the present application are neither disclosed nor taught by any of the applied prior art references, either singly or in combination, and the rejections of these claims should be withdrawn.

It is additionally that new claims 21 and 22 patentably define over the prior art of record and should be allowed. For example, claim 21 recites that the appliance operable to carry out at least one cleaning process using cleaning liquid recited in claim 11 further comprises a device for displaying values relating to the content of washing-active substances in the cleaning liquid determined by the sensor, whereby an operator can add cleaning agents during the cleaning operation on the basis of an indicated concentration.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of claims 11 -22 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,



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